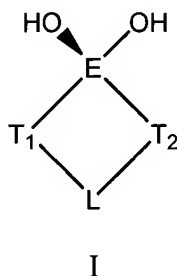


WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of controlling bacterial growth, comprising exposing a bacterium to a compound of structure I



- wherein E is selected from the group consisting of B, P, and S, T<sub>1</sub> and T<sub>2</sub> are each independently selected from the group consisting of O, NR, and CH<sub>2</sub>, where R = H or C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkyl, or C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> oxoalkyl, and L is selected from the group consisting of ethylene, propylene, and four to six-membered alicyclic and aromatic rings, provided that structure I does not include Al-2-borate.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein E is B.
  3. The method of claim 2, wherein T<sub>1</sub> and T<sub>2</sub> are O.
  4. The method of claim 1, wherein the compound has a molecular weight less than about 750 Da.
  5. The method of claim 4, wherein the molecular weight is less than about 500 Da.
  6. The method of claim 1, wherein E is P.
  7. The method of claim 6, wherein T<sub>1</sub> and T<sub>2</sub> are O.
  8. The method of Claim 1 comprising administering a therapeutically effective amount of the compound to a human.
  9. The method of Claim 1 in which the bacterium is exposed to an amount of the compound that affects biofilm formation.